

CLAWS Newsletter



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by Mehul Singh Gill

JAPAN

30 May 2026 ([Kyodo News](#)): Japan Dispatches Self-Defense Forces Personnel to NATO Support Mission for Ukraine

Japan has deployed four Self-Defense Forces personnel to NATO's Security Assistance and Training for Ukraine headquarters in Germany, marking the country's first participation in the mission. The personnel will support coordination activities related to military assistance and training programs for Ukraine. Japanese officials stated that participation will provide valuable operational insights while further strengthening cooperation with NATO. Separately, Japan announced financial support for a NATO-led framework that facilitates the procurement of non-lethal equipment for Ukraine. The move reflects Tokyo's continued engagement with European security issues and support for Ukraine.

30 May 2026 ([Kyodo News](#)): Japan Promotes Frigate Export and Expands Defense Cooperation with New Zealand and Australia

Japan used a trilateral defence meeting with New Zealand and Australia to advance discussions on the potential export of Mogami-class frigates to New Zealand and strengthen security cooperation among the three countries. Defense ministers reaffirmed support for closer military coordination, expanded joint training, and efforts to improve interoperability. Officials also discussed regional security challenges and cooperation in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific. New Zealand is currently evaluating options for replacing its aging frigate fleet, with a final procurement decision expected in 2027.

1 June 2026 ([Kyodo News](#)): SoftBank Becomes Japan's Largest Publicly Listed Company by Market Value

SoftBank Group surpassed Toyota Motor to become Japan's most valuable publicly traded company by market capitalization, reflecting strong investor confidence in artificial intelligence and technology-related sectors. The company's valuation rose following gains linked to its investments in AI-related ventures and plans to expand data center operations overseas. SoftBank's leadership has emphasized long-term ambitions in artificial intelligence

development and digital infrastructure. The shift marks a notable development in Japan's corporate landscape, with technology and AI-driven firms increasingly attracting investor attention alongside the country's traditional industrial leaders.

5 June 2026 ([Kyodo News](#)): Japan Approves Supplementary Budget to Address Rising Energy Costs

Japan's parliament approved a ¥3.11 trillion supplementary budget aimed at mitigating the impact of elevated energy prices and supply disruptions linked to instability in the Middle East. The package includes funding for electricity and gas subsidies, gasoline price support measures, and assistance programs for households and businesses facing higher energy costs. Officials stated that the measures are intended to ease inflationary pressures and support economic stability. The budget was approved shortly after the passage of the fiscal 2026 budget and will be financed through the issuance of deficit-covering government bonds.

5 June 2026 ([Kyodo News](#)): Japan and Indonesia Begin Discussions on Potential Destroyer Transfer

Japan and Indonesia have agreed to begin working-level discussions on the possible transfer of retired Asagiri-class destroyers to the Indonesian Navy. Defense officials from both countries also agreed to examine issues related to training, maintenance, operational requirements, and broader defense technology cooperation. The discussions follow Japan's recent easing of defense export regulations and form part of Tokyo's broader efforts to strengthen security partnerships in the Indo-Pacific. The Asagiri-class vessels, originally commissioned in the late 1980s, are equipped for anti-submarine warfare and can operate maritime helicopters.

10 June 2026 ([Kyodo News](#)): Japan and Malaysia Strengthen Cooperation on Energy Security and Maritime Affairs

Japan and Malaysia agreed to deepen cooperation on energy security, maritime security, supply-chain resilience, and emerging technologies during talks between Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim in Tokyo. The discussions focused on securing stable energy supplies, strengthening critical mineral supply chains, and expanding

defense cooperation. Both sides also agreed to establish a platform for cooperation in artificial intelligence and reaffirmed support for a free and open Indo-Pacific. The agreements come amid concerns over global energy markets and disruptions affecting maritime trade routes.

12 June 2026 ([Kyodo News](#)): Japan Successfully Launches New Configuration of H3 Rocket

Japan successfully launched an H3 rocket powered solely by liquid-fuel engines, completing the development of all planned configurations of its flagship launch vehicle. The rocket carried several small satellites and a test payload into orbit from the Tanegashima Space Center. The successful mission follows previous technical setbacks and is expected to strengthen confidence in Japan's space launch capabilities. Officials described the H3 as a key component of Japan's efforts to maintain independent access to space and enhance the competitiveness of its aerospace industry through improved performance and reduced launch costs.

15 June 2026 ([Kyodo News](#)): Japan and United Kingdom Expand Cooperation on Economic Security and Advanced Technologies

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer agreed to deepen cooperation in economic security, critical technologies, energy, and defense during talks in London. The two governments announced initiatives covering artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, semiconductors, cybersecurity, space, and civil nuclear cooperation. Both sides also reaffirmed support for accelerating the development of a next-generation fighter aircraft under the Global Combat Air Programme involving Japan, the United Kingdom, and Italy. The discussions were accompanied by investment commitments and agreements aimed at strengthening technological collaboration and supply-chain resilience.

17 June 2026 ([Kyodo News](#)): Japan Expands Drone Restrictions Around Sensitive Facilities

Japan enacted new legislation expanding no-fly zones for drones around designated government, diplomatic, and strategic facilities as part of efforts to strengthen security and counterterrorism measures. The law increases restricted airspace around key sites and

introduces stricter penalties for unauthorized drone operations. Authorities cited advances in drone technology, including greater speed, range, and payload capacity, as factors behind the changes. The government also plans to publish updated restricted-area information and conduct awareness campaigns to ensure compliance with the revised regulations.

17 June 2026 ([Kyodo News](#)): Japan Records Trade Deficit Amid Energy Supply Disruptions

Japan recorded a trade deficit of ¥378.6 billion in May as higher energy procurement costs and disruptions linked to instability in the Middle East affected trade flows. While exports continued to grow, imports also increased due to higher energy prices and purchases of consumer electronics. Data showed a significant reduction in crude oil imports from the Middle East, accompanied by increased sourcing from alternative suppliers, including the United States. Officials stated that efforts to diversify energy supplies are continuing as Japan seeks to reduce vulnerability to disruptions affecting major maritime energy routes.

19 June 2026 ([Kyodo News](#)): Japan Highlights Security and Economic Priorities at G7 Summit

Japan used the Group of Seven summit in France to advance discussions on Indo-Pacific security, supply-chain resilience, critical minerals, energy security, and support for Ukraine. Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi also held bilateral meetings with several partner countries and emphasized closer cooperation on shared security challenges. Analysts noted that Japan continued its traditional approach of coalition-building and consensus diplomacy while ensuring that issues such as maritime security, economic coercion, and the stability of critical supply chains remained prominent in summit discussions and outcome documents.

23 June 2026 ([Kyodo News](#)): Japan Supreme Court Upholds Dissolution Order Against Unification Church

Japan's Supreme Court upheld a lower court decision ordering the dissolution of the Unification Church as a religious corporation, concluding that the organization's long-standing fundraising practices caused significant harm to followers and justified legal intervention. The

ruling supports the continuation of liquidation procedures aimed at compensating victims and marks the first time a religious organization has been dissolved primarily for violations of civil law. The decision follows years of scrutiny surrounding the group's activities and renewed public attention after the 2022 assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

24 June 2026 ([Kyodo News](#)): Japanese National Detained in China Amid Rare-Earths Export Control Investigation

A Japanese employee of a major industrial machinery manufacturer has been detained in China in connection with an investigation reportedly linked to export control regulations involving rare earth-related products. Japanese officials confirmed that two nationals were detained in May on allegations of violating Chinese import and export laws. The incident comes amid heightened tensions over export controls and restrictions affecting strategic materials and dual-use technologies. Tokyo has stated that it is providing consular assistance while seeking further information regarding the circumstances surrounding the detentions.



10 June 2026 ([KCNA](#)): China and North Korea Highlight Outcomes of High-Level State Visit

North Korean and Chinese state media highlighted the outcomes of Chinese President Xi Jinping's recent state visit to North Korea, during which Xi Jinping and Kim Jong Un held discussions on bilateral relations and regional issues. According to official accounts, the two leaders exchanged views on strengthening political, economic, and strategic cooperation between their countries and reached a series of understandings regarding future bilateral engagement. Both sides emphasized continued coordination on matters of mutual interest and reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining close relations and cooperation in support of regional stability and development.

12 June 2026 ([KCNA](#)): North Korea holds first Plenary Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly

North Korea's Supreme People's Assembly Standing Committee convened its first plenary meeting of the current term and adopted a new law governing academic degrees and titles. The session also addressed personnel matters, including the election of judges and people's assessors to the Supreme Court. According to state media, the law was approved following review and discussion by the legislature's relevant committees. Officials from government ministries and state institutions attended the meeting as observers. The adoption of the legislation forms part of ongoing efforts to regulate academic qualifications and related administrative procedures within the country.

15 June 2026 ([NK News](#)): North Korea-Linked Cyber Operation Steals \$36 Million from Blockchain Identity Verification Platform

A blockchain-based identity verification service reported the theft of approximately US\$36 million in cryptocurrency following a cyberattack attributed by investigators to North Korean actors. According to the company and an independent cybersecurity assessment, attackers gained access through a phishing campaign targeting a senior executive before obtaining credentials and digital wallet access. The operation resulted in the transfer and unauthorized creation of cryptocurrency tokens across multiple blockchain networks. The incident represents the latest in a series of major cryptocurrency thefts linked to North Korean cyber actors and highlights the continued targeting of digital asset platforms.

17 June 2026 ([NK News](#)): North Korea Recalls Ambassador to the United Kingdom Following Sanctions Dispute

North Korea has recalled its ambassador to the United Kingdom and downgraded diplomatic relations to the chargé d'affaires level following British sanctions imposed on the Songdowon International Children's Camp. Pyongyang criticized the sanctions, which were linked to allegations concerning the camp's involvement in programs for children from Russian-controlled areas of Ukraine, and described them as politically motivated. The move adds to existing diplomatic tensions between the two countries at a time when efforts to restore a full British diplomatic presence in Pyongyang remain unresolved. North Korean officials indicated that future relations would depend on the United Kingdom's policy decisions.

24 June 2026 ([KCNA](#)): North Korea Commissions New Multi-Mission Destroyer into Naval Service

North Korea formally commissioned the Choe Hyon, a new multi-mission destroyer, into the Korean People's Army Navy during a ceremony held at Nampho Port attended by Kim Jong Un and senior military officials. State media reported that the vessel completed testing and operational evaluations before entering service with the West Sea Fleet. Officials described the destroyer as part of broader efforts to modernize naval capabilities and strengthen maritime defense. The ceremony included the formal transfer of the vessel to the navy, commissioning procedures, and statements emphasizing the role of naval modernization in North Korea's national defense strategy.

24 June 2026 ([NK News](#)): North Korean Soldier Crosses Inter-Korean Border and Seeks Defection

A North Korean soldier was taken into South Korean custody after crossing the Military Demarcation Line in the central section of the inter-Korean border. According to South Korean military authorities, the individual is currently undergoing investigation and reportedly expressed an intention to defect. Direct defections by North Korean military personnel across the heavily fortified border remain relatively rare due to extensive surveillance, minefields, and border fortifications. The incident follows several similar cases in recent years and comes amid continued efforts by Pyongyang to strengthen physical barriers and reduce cross-border interactions with South Korea.

SOUTH KOREA

7 June 2026 ([The Straits Times](#)): President Lee Nominates Han Seong-sook as South Korea's Prime Minister

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung has nominated Han Seong-sook, the current Minister of SMEs and Start-ups and former chief executive of Naver, to serve as prime minister. If confirmed by the National Assembly, Han would become South Korea's first female prime minister in two decades. Presidential officials stated that her experience in technology and

business would support the government's efforts to advance artificial intelligence development and promote broader economic growth. The nomination reflects the administration's emphasis on innovation, digital transformation, and expanding economic opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises.

22 June 2026 ([Yonhap](#)): Former Justice Minister Sentenced for Role in 2024 Martial Law Attempt

A Seoul court sentenced former Justice Minister Park Sung-jae to 25 years in prison after finding him guilty of playing a key role in former President Yoon Suk Yeol's December 2024 martial law declaration. The conviction followed an investigation led by a special counsel examining the circumstances surrounding the failed martial law attempt. Prosecutors argued that Park participated in actions that supported the declaration and abused official authority during the crisis. The ruling represents one of the most significant legal developments arising from investigations into the events surrounding the 2024 political crisis.

23 June 2026 ([Yonhap](#)): South Korea to Posthumously Award Top Military Honor to Officer Killed During 1979 Coup

South Korea has decided to posthumously award its highest military decoration to Lt. Col. Kim Oh-rang, who was killed while resisting forces involved in the December 1979 military coup. The decision follows a reassessment of his service record and recognition of his actions while defending his commander during the coup led by Maj. Gen. Chun Doo-hwan. Government officials stated that the award reflects the significance of his sacrifice and service. Kim's death had previously been reclassified as having occurred in action, paving the way for the latest recognition.

23 June 2026 ([Asahi Shimbun](#)): South Korea Reaffirms Willingness to Accept North Korean Prisoners of War from Ukraine

South Korea has reiterated that it is prepared to accept North Korean prisoners of war captured in Ukraine if they express a desire to relocate to South Korea. The Foreign Ministry stated that any repatriation should respect the wishes of the individuals concerned and opposed their return

to North Korea or Russia against their will. The announcement comes amid reports of North Korean personnel participating in support of Russian military operations in Ukraine. South Korean and Ukrainian officials are expected to discuss related issues during ministerial-level talks scheduled to take place in Seoul later this month.

24 June 2026 ([Yonhap](#)): Presidential Policy Office Calls for Expanded Investment in AI Infrastructure

South Korea's presidential policy chief has called for large-scale investment in infrastructure to support the country's growing artificial intelligence sector and sustain long-term economic growth. Speaking at a policy discussion, Kim Yong-beom emphasized the need for substantial investments in electricity generation, data centers, land development, and digital infrastructure to support the expanding semiconductor and AI industries. He also highlighted the importance of addressing social and labor issues associated with technological transformation and ensuring that the economic benefits generated by AI-driven growth are distributed broadly across society.

24 June 2026 ([Yonhap](#)): South Korea Records Strongest Birth Growth in Seven Years

South Korea recorded 24,521 births in April, representing an 18 percent increase from the previous year and the highest figure for the month in seven years. Government data also showed that births during the first four months of 2026 rose by more than 15 percent year-on-year. The country's fertility rate increased to 0.93, while marriages continued to grow, reaching their highest April level in a decade. Officials and experts attributed the trend to rising marriage rates and changing perceptions regarding childbirth, although the fertility rate remains below the level required for long-term population stability.

24 June 2026 ([Reuters](#)): South Korea Explores New Semiconductor Investment Plans to Support Growing AI Demand

The South Korean government is holding discussions with Samsung Electronics and SK Hynix regarding the next phase of large-scale semiconductor investments as demand for advanced chips continues to rise with the expansion of artificial intelligence technologies. Officials indicated that existing construction timelines for new semiconductor facilities may need to be

accelerated significantly to meet projected demand. The discussions also include plans for an additional semiconductor cluster to complement ongoing developments. Policymakers emphasized the importance of supporting the country's semiconductor industry as a key component of future economic growth and technological competitiveness.

TAIWAN

14 June 2026 ([Focus Taiwan](#)): Taiwan Launches Intelligence Reporting Platform Focused on Developments in China

Taiwan's National Security Bureau (NSB) has launched a dedicated online reporting platform intended to receive intelligence-related information from Chinese nationals regarding political, military, economic, and social developments in China. The initiative aims to diversify Taiwan's intelligence-gathering channels and is accompanied by guidance on secure communication practices for potential informants. The NSB stated that the platform follows approaches employed by intelligence agencies in several other countries and forms part of broader efforts to enhance information collection. The bureau also released a promotional video encouraging individuals to provide information through the new reporting mechanism.

16 June 2026 ([Taipei Times](#)): Support Grows Across Taiwan's Political Spectrum for Abolishing the Control Yuan

Calls to abolish Taiwan's Control Yuan gained momentum after one of President William Lai's nominees to the government watchdog body declined the appointment, citing support for constitutional reforms. Political parties across the spectrum expressed varying degrees of support for proposals to eliminate the institution through constitutional amendment. Opposition lawmakers announced plans to advance legislative discussions on the issue, while members of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party reiterated their longstanding support for reform. The debate reflects broader discussions regarding the future structure of Taiwan's constitutional system and oversight institutions.

21 June 2026 ([Focus Taiwan](#)): Taiwan Proposes Tougher Penalties for Military Draft Evasion

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense has proposed amendments to compulsory military service legislation that would introduce mandatory prison sentences for individuals convicted of evading military service obligations. The proposed changes would replace the current system under which many offenders receive short prison terms that can be converted into fines. The amendments would also increase penalties for evading reservist training and wartime mobilization duties. The proposal forms part of broader efforts to strengthen enforcement of military service requirements following recent investigations into alleged draft evasion schemes involving falsified medical diagnoses.

23 June 2026 ([Taipei Times](#)): Taiwan Expo in Europe Highlights Expanding Technology and Supply Chain Cooperation

The Taiwan Expo in Europe opened in Warsaw, bringing together government officials, industry representatives, and businesses to promote cooperation in artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, electric vehicles, and supply chain development. Taiwanese and European participants emphasized opportunities for collaboration in research, technology, and industrial investment, while discussions also covered the development of a proposed technology park in Poland. More than 100 Taiwanese companies are participating in the event, which focuses on strengthening resilient and reliable supply chains. Officials highlighted growing Taiwan-Poland economic ties and broader cooperation between Taiwan and European partners.

23 June 2026 ([Focus Taiwan](#)): Taiwan and Lithuania Suspend New Economic Cooperation Talks Amid Political Transition

Taiwan and Lithuania have agreed to temporarily suspend discussions on a proposed economic cooperation initiative following political changes in Lithuania and the formation of a new governing coalition. The project, initially proposed by Lithuania's Foreign Ministry, sought to strengthen bilateral cooperation in high-technology sectors and encourage Taiwanese investment. Taiwanese officials stated that the pause was linked to developments in Lithuania's domestic political environment and reaffirmed Taipei's commitment to expanding economic

and trade relations with Lithuania. Existing areas of cooperation, including lasers, medical artificial intelligence, and fintech, remain important components of the bilateral partnership.

24 June 2026 ([Taipei Times](#)): Taiwan Conducts Nationwide Combat Readiness Exercise

Taiwan's military has begun a five-day Immediate Combat Readiness Exercise designed to strengthen its ability to rapidly transition from peacetime operations to wartime conditions. The nationwide exercise involves the deployment of combat units to designated defensive positions and rehearsals of operational responses to potential security contingencies. Military officials stated that the drills are intended to improve preparedness against scenarios in which escalating gray-zone activities could develop into a broader military confrontation. The exercise includes movements of armored and communications units across key strategic locations and transportation hubs throughout Taiwan.

MONGOLIA

18 June 2026 ([MONTSAME](#)): Mongolia and European Investment Bank Advance Cooperation on Energy Transition and Green Finance

Mongolia and the European Investment Bank (EIB) have agreed to expand cooperation on clean energy, infrastructure development, and sustainable finance. Discussions focused on utilizing EIB financing and technical expertise to support renewable energy investments, transmission network expansion, regional infrastructure projects, and Mongolia's transition away from coal-based energy generation. The two sides also explored opportunities to develop Mongolia's green capital market through green bonds and other sustainable finance instruments. Cooperation related to climate action, desertification mitigation, and preparations for the UN Convention to Combat Desertification COP17 conference in Ulaanbaatar was also discussed.

22 June 2026 ([MONTSAME](#)): India and Mongolia Hold High-Level Diplomatic Engagements During Official Visit

India's External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar arrived in Ulaanbaatar for an official visit at the invitation of Mongolian Foreign Minister Battsetseg Batmunkh. During the visit, Jaishankar is scheduled to meet President Khurelsukh Ukhnaa, Chairman of the State Great Khural Byambatsogt Sandag, and hold official talks with Foreign Minister Battsetseg. The visit reflects ongoing diplomatic engagement between the two countries and provides an opportunity to discuss bilateral cooperation and broader regional and international issues of mutual interest.

22 June 2026 ([MONTSAME](#)): Khaan Quest 2026 Peacekeeping Exercise Commences with Participation from 18 Countries

The Khaan Quest 2026 multinational peacekeeping exercise officially commenced at Mongolia's Five Hills Training Area near Ulaanbaatar, bringing together more than 1,100 military personnel from 18 countries. Marking its 20th anniversary, the exercise has evolved from a bilateral Mongolia–United States training event into a major multinational peacekeeping platform. Activities include command-post exercises, field training, professional military instruction, and training related to unmanned aerial systems. Mongolian officials highlighted the exercise's role in strengthening peacekeeping capabilities, military preparedness, and international defense cooperation while promoting peaceful approaches to conflict resolution.

24 June 2026 ([MONTSAME](#)): Mongolia and Türkiye Expand Defense Cooperation Through New Bilateral Agreements

Mongolia and Türkiye signed three defense cooperation agreements during an official visit by Mongolian Defense Minister Batlut Damba to Ankara. The agreements cover military training cooperation, financial cooperation in the military sector, and the implementation of financial assistance programs. The measures are intended to support personnel training, professional development, military modernization, and defense preparedness. The visit also resulted in the renewal of an intergovernmental military cooperation agreement for the first time in 11 years. Officials from both countries stated that the agreements would strengthen bilateral defense ties and support broader efforts to promote regional and international security.

About the Author

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